



Probation: a social and financial quandary

Competing for state dollars

A CHALLENGING NEW STATE MANDATE LEAVES IT UP TO THE COUNTIES TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO FINANCE PROBATION PROGRAMS; BUT POLICY AND POLITICS COULD CAUSE CHAOS



Tennis... everyone?
Craze hits Inyo, Page 14

TIME WAS WHEN THE STATE in its infinite wisdom sent money to counties paying them, in effect, for every felon they set loose on the streets, on probation. The program provided in application a kind of incentive to keep people out of the increasingly expensive penitentiaries and enough money, more or less, to cover the cost of watching over the free lawbreakers.

But over the years, a startling increase in crimes by repeat offenders suggested to the lawmakers that the plan might not be working.

This year, a new plan went into effect. It provides state grants paid directly into county treasuries and gives the county supervisors the power to determine how it will best be expended to manage, at county level, the state's probation (See PROBATION, Page 2)

THE Inyo County News-Letter

Independence, Cal.
Week of Sept. 11, 1978

Compiled by
John Heston
Benett Kessler

A NEWS ALTERNATIVE ♦ EASTERN SIERRA NEWS SERVICE

ANGRY VOICES AT LONE PINE POLICE ISSUE A HOT ONE. Story on Page 10



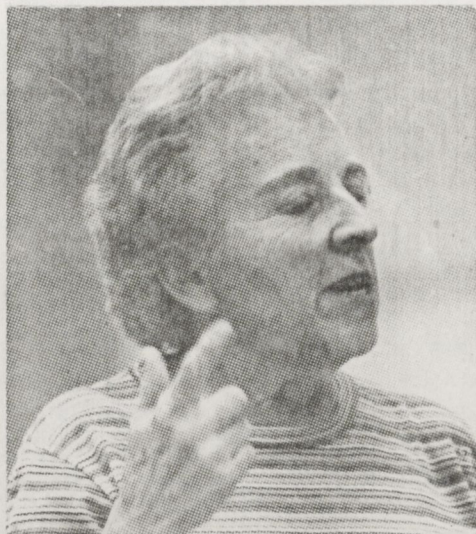
Sellberg "abused"



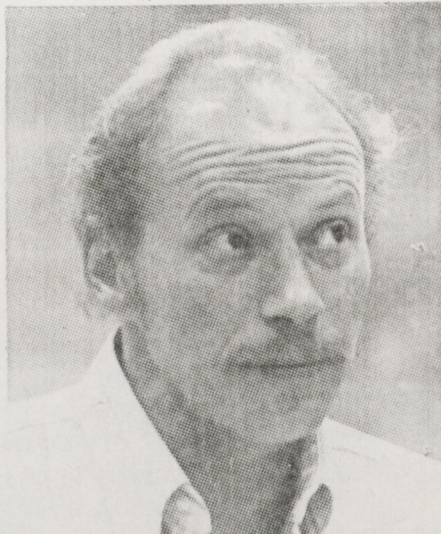
Adkins "Recall vote"



Yother "politics"



Mills "Son arrested"



Marshall "lack respect"



Bolling "guns pulled"

PROBATION, Continued

programs. The new policy also places in the hands of local officials a certain amount of power - indirect power to be sure - to set local policy on "hard-line" or "liberal-line" approaches to the questions of who stays in jail and who walks the streets. The supervisors, for instance, could grant funds to its own county probation department, or to private agencies dealing with rehabilitation. Conceivably, the funding could be given the agency which most closely follows the wishes of the supervisors.

Two such agencies, each of them proven effective in dealing with a great number of troubled kids and adults, came before the county's Criminal Justice Advisory Group which met this week at Independence. Each was acutely aware that only a certain number of dollars are available and for these they must convincingly compete against the county's own probation department. And it was on this point that Chet Erskine of New Horizons and Bob Harke of Boys' Ranch of the Pacific (now Christ's Chapel) clashed head-on with John Lee, the head of that department.

Aside from purely financial considerations, the question arose naturally: What to do with Inyo's criminals? There are as many views and theories offered in answer to that question as there are inmates at the Independence jail. The answers contradict and collide.

This year, Probation Officer Lee must justify \$71,000 of state funding. As County Administrator John K. Smith, who is also the chairman of the advisory group, put it: "He is being challenged to provide a program. They have kind of laid it on Lee."

"The general attitude of the group appears to be that they want better supervision of the probationers. It has been alleged that they have not been properly supervised, and the committee wants a guarantee of supervision."

The committee's ideas are not to be ignored. The committee reports to the supervisors and makes recommendations; the supervisors hold the purse strings over any program that Lee proposes. The committee, after hearing Lee and the "private enterprise" agencies, will draft its recommendations sometime this week for study by the supervisors. Smith and the committee "have heard the views from



Probation Officer John Lee
"...clearly under the gun."

all," but if any have made up their minds, he was not saying.

The money at stake was formerly turned over to Lee as a probation subsidy to do with more or less what he wished, but now he must compete with the private agencies which, if they meet state standards, can share in it if the board approves.

The district attorney says he thinks the funding should go to the probation department, but then, as a partisan observer, he has ideas of his own as to its use. Predictably, DA "Buck" Gibbons believes the Inyo courts are unacceptably lenient on criminals. "Probation is too freely granted, and once it is granted, there is too little control. The priorities haven't been met."

"Close to 95% of the cases that probation recommends, the judge accepts. But intensive supervision of the probationers does not exist." Gibbons recommends that two deputy probation officers be assigned to in-the-field

supervision "a hundred percent of the time."

As it presently stands, the department allocates only about 25% of its man-hours to the actual dealing with and keeping tabs on its miscreant charges. Lee would like to increase that time, maybe up to 60 percent, "shifting emphasis from office time to community case-load." The public, of course, wants the probationers watched every minute.

But there again, "probation" and leniency depends usually on whether you are the victim of crime, or a member of the criminal's family. From each side comes pressure on the county's criminal justice system.

Harke had a view on it: "The consensus is that the probation program has been a disaster for the past several years. The Bishop police chief is begging Lee to visit the probationers."

Another member of the advisory committee is Sheriff Floyd Barton, a hard-liner on crime and criminals. His own deputies last year issued a public statement attacking the county's criminal justice system and its probation policies. Lee, facing Committeeman Barton, was clearly under the gun. "What I want to know," said Barton, "is what the probation department will do with third-time offenders?"

Deputy Probation Officer Jim Roberts offered the answer: "They're too high a community risk," he said. "We would set new criteria for them."

The sheriff smiled. "I just wanted to hear you say that," he said. With the committee stacked with a sheriff and a D.A., a probation man might have to knuckle under to get funding. The new system clearly puts the rein in the hands of the county powers.

New Horizons' Director Erskine gave his pitch. The new system at least puts government agencies in competition with "free enterprise" and may yet prove who can do the best job for the least amount of tax money. Erskine proposes a program for misdemeanor offenders with drug and alcohol-related problems - "a plan to kick the habit and get to work so they are not dead weight on the county. It would free-up the time for the probation workers to

(PROBATION Continued on Page 4)

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DOCTORS DO IT; LAWYERS DO IT; bureaucrats do it; teen-agers do it; little clubby cliques do it; newspaper people do it - and, *Heaven forbid!*, police officers do it; which is to say we all do it - band together in little groupies, always *very* exclusive, very self-important, very self-sympathetic, and very convinced that everybody else out there is not only a little less important than we, but also maybe just a tiny bit inferior somehow. And then every now and then these cliques have a way of colliding - usually after one or the other has begun some sort of self-righteous crusade in the name of justice, or, worse still, piety. The mess at Lone Pine is a result of some of this thinking, and if there was already a polarization of cultures - kids vs. cops - it looks now like it's going to get a lot worse if everybody automatically adopts a lynch-mob attitude and goes on a *let's-hang-all-the-cops* kick. Since the 60's and the hate-authority, do-your-own-thing-whatever-it-is psychology set in, the cops have been under the gun. They are jeered at, despised, joked about, told-off by everybody from the street brats up to and including the supreme court. They are routinely referred to - still - as pigs. And every idiot with a gun assumes them to be fair game while the courts sit by and turn every addict and strong-arm type loose on the streets. Lawlessness rules the land from Washington down. And some of the most outspoken critics of the police, if not *the* most outspoken critics, are themselves day-by-day lawbreakers. So accustomed are they to the use and purchase of narcotics they think nothing of it, assuming it to be a natural right. Kids drink - and buy - alcohol with impunity when even one in 10 adults can't handle the stuff. The cops, trained in less free-wheeling ways and bound by public pressure to be perfect angels, must watch all this happen. And everybody has a different idea as to which laws should be enforced and which should be overlooked. And moms and dads are not always the best examples for the young people, tending, as they do, to cheat here and there on a tax, go home drunk after a party, fight and swear a lot - and then raise hell about "crime in the streets." They can't have it both ways. And all our little cliques, the liberals, the conservatives, the these and the those, the us and the them, talk a lot about "alienation." The fact is, under the heavens, there is only *all of us, cops and kids included*. People will respect cops that keep the peace; cops will respect kids that are not breaking the law.



BENETT KESSLER

IT WASN'T INTENDED THAT WAY, but when we ran a story about the Lone Pine incident last week, our Lone Pine circulation increased there by (would you believe?!) seven-plus percent! Well, folks, we appreciate the support, and Lord knows we need it - but where were you while we have been running all those less sensational, but far, far, more important stories?

ANOTHER CLUBBY GROUP - THE FEMINISTS. A female journalist, Helen Lawrenson - former reporter, author of three books presently writing a

fourth - says the women's movement is a "Phony, non-issue." She supports certain aspects of the movement like property rights, equal pay, free abortions, but she says she sees no need to "wage a sex war" to get things done. Amen. Lawrenson attributes most of the hullabaloo to what she defines as "white, middle-class, elitest intellectual women" who she sees as "far removed from the average working woman."

VERY PLEASANT PEOPLE DEPT: Lynn and Murray Clay. (He's the son of Jack Clay, the tax assessor, she, the daughter of Judge Verne Summers). Friendly types. They're expecting - in March.

ADD VPP's: Rich Haering. For years he owned the big Texaco station at Lone Pine, then he took off for the orient, and returned to buy another station at Bishop - the 76 on the highway north out of Bishop. Lots of smile, and, better still, lots of service there.

AND STILL MORE VPP'S: Connie Rossi and husband Lou up for a visit from San Diego and listening to her dad, old what's-his-name, *that pianist at the club*. And still another VPP, in spite of the fact he's a brown-belt karate type: Ron Wilcox. Ron's trying to set up some serious karate classes hereabouts if he can tear himself away from the Mammoth ski slopes this winter.

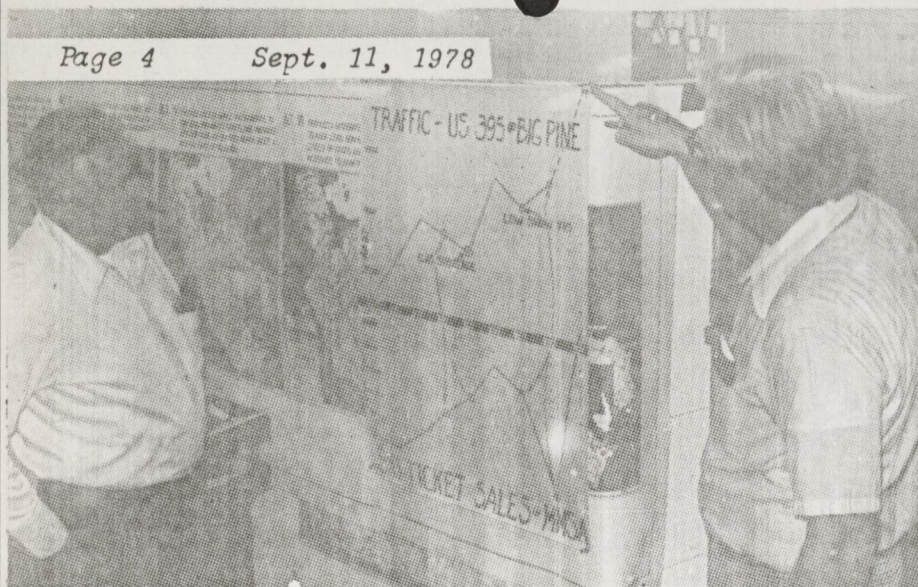
ELLEN STERN HARRIS, packing with her the not-insubstantial weight of Beverly Hills, has launched an all-fronts attack on the Metropolitan Water District, and called for a thorough grand jury investigation into what she calls questionable election campaign tactics, file-shredding to cover all manner of questionable activity, nepotism, etc. She's a member of the MWD board of directors, and says her fellow members abuse expense and travel expenses.....Ellen...uh...when you're finished there...we'd, uh, like to call your attention to...uh...this little water company we seem to have up here...You know the one; it works hand-in-glove with your outfit.

PART OF EVERYONE'S PROBLEMS THESE DAYS SEEMS to be with the english language. We've spent a few of the past days looking into a Bureau of Land Management line: "inventorying and studying" land to be made wilderness. Now to me, "inventorying" means a kind of taking stock; "studying," means observing and finding out about this or that. But then that is english, more or less. But in dealing with bureaucrats, one must learn a whole new language and expect a lot of euphemisms. Judging by BLM activities in recent months "inventorying and studying" translates out as "moving in on your land, finding some technicality in which you have overlooked a regulation or so (our regulation), and kicking you out - at gun-point if need be. No matter if you have a legitimate claim on it." Just wanted to set the record straight, folks.

BUT MAY THE NEWS IN YOUR DAY BE GOOD NEWS, every day...

- Sincerely,

BK



John Storm and Allan Hendrix
A Caltrans graph of Bishop's
increasing traffic

Caltrans Director Bob Watkins
With Hendrix and statistics



Dan Schat
"Don't stop;
pass on through"

Photos and
text: Les Hall



PROBATION, Continued

do a better job."

And Harke had a proposal, complicated by the fact that he is unlicensed. It appears - again - that government needs all the forms at least, if not the realities. Harke has been working with youth, more or less successfully, at his "ranch" at Lone Pine - but regulations and his religious category may make licensing a problem. The county administrator said after the meeting that Harke would be seriously considered for part of the probation program, that "he could participate if he can qualify. The religious part could be overcome."

Both Harke and Erskine - and, later, the county administrator - agree that "probation" as such can only deal with the symptoms of the social malaise, rarely touching on its causes. And it is not that Lee and his workers are unaware of that problem. Lee devotes a great deal of his time, even his personal time, to problems arising among his charges, particularly among the young. But he too is faced with money and manpower problems, as always.

The treatment center advocates insist with a great deal of observable evidence to support their claim that before "probation" can work, alcohol and narcotics, and the social and psychological conditions prompting their use, must be dealt with. Erskine told

News Briefs

BISHOP'S PARKING ISSUE NARROWS TO A VOTE; GLIDDEN GETS BACK ON THE BALLOT; THE BLM FINDS A VACUUM AND GALLOPING APATHY

PARKING ON BISHOP'S MAIN STREET is probably in its last days. One of the town's more appropriately-named planning commissioners - Joe Bishop - calls Bishop "the most dangerous place in the world." Well, maybe; but almost everyone would certainly agree with him on another point: it has one of the most exasperating traffic hang-ups anywhere. At a public session before the Bishop City Council this week, some figures were brought forth by local Caltrans officials who had apparently been doing impressive homework on the problem. For instance: the rate of travel through the town is up 16% over last year and is expected to go higher - a lot higher. Good news for the business people, all those estimates - but only if the potential customers can find a place to park. Caltrans Bob Watkins said Bishop can also expect "slower traffic, more congestion - and more accidents."

The trend is definitely moving in that direction; in 1976, six fatal accidents occurred near Bishop; in '77 there were 14; and, this year, already 14 with months to go. Skiing has a lot to do with it in wet years or dry. In 1965, Mammoth Mountain sold 229,000 lift tickets, and in the past season, well over a million.

Facts and figures notwithstanding, at least one local businessman voiced the case against parking restrictions. Dan Schat said of the city

council: "If they remove the parking, they should provide alternative parking spaces." And how would they do that? Schat suggests to the council that the councilmen could "relocate Bishop Volkswagen and make a parking lot there. The owner is willing." Just where the car company would go was unclear, however. Schat also suggested that red curbs on Main

(See NEWS BRIEFS on Page 9)

the advisors that "about 90%" of crime is alcohol- or drug-related. "I have counted about a hundred overdose cases at Northern Inyo Hospital," he testified.

So as the week got underway, the advisory committee had much to ponder. The counties now apparently have more control over probation funding - but also a responsibility to set the pattern for results; some decisions they must make will not come easy.

The probation officer, Lee, whose own ideas are supported by Superior Judge Verne Summers and Justice Court Judge Don Chapman, maintains that he "stands by his methods."

"They are done," he says, "in clear conscience. Probation is a neutral body. We approach each individual case with a neutral attitude. We do not grant probation; the court does. We put down what we see."

As for the district attorney's hard line, Lee says "I respect Buck's opinion. That's his philosophy; we can't all think alike."

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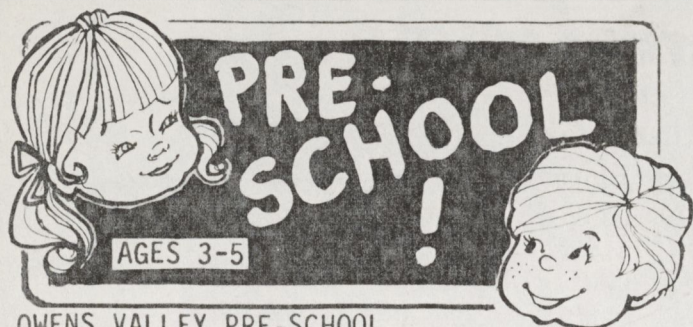
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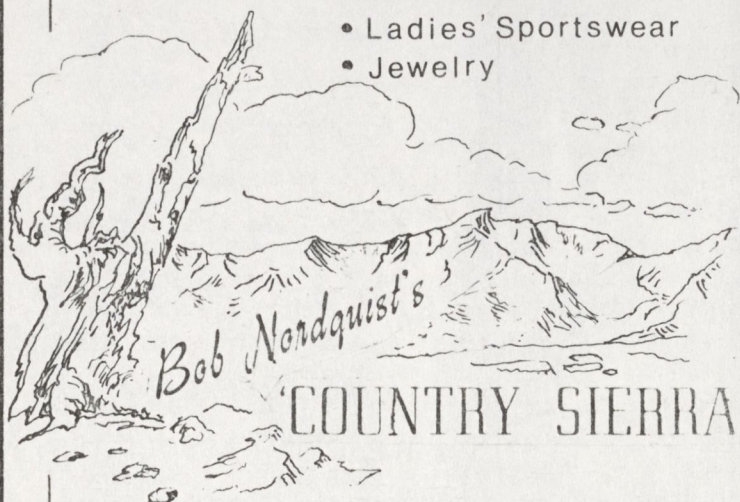
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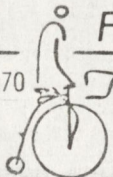
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LONE PINE

Street could advise the travelers: "Don't stop, pass on through."

All protests considered, the council acted, more or less, on the issue. The members voted 3-2 to remove parking - but it was a straw vote to determine where the council stood. They'll talk it all over again at another meeting on September 25.



Empty chairs at a Bureau of Land Management public hearing
...a brightly flaring issue that may have burned to an ember

ROGER GLIDDEN, the third district's disputed supervisorial candidate,

was exultant. An appellate court at San Bernardino had ruled that Glidden, after all, will share the ballot with Moe Jacobson in a three-way race with Incumbent Wilma Muth. Jacobson has been working with the Forest Service and when the decision came in he was reportedly "high up on a mountain somewhere" and unavailable for comment. They had tied for the ballot spot against Muth. Ms. Jacobson opined that her husband may take the case to still another higher court. "He believes in his effort to get the tie broken," she said. Glidden was holding back no comments. Calling newsmen who he thought might not have heard of his victory, he took the opportunity to make a statement: "It looks even better for me than before. I'm picking up support daily. People want a change and a person with experience in that office. I think Muth is beatable even with all three of us on the ballot. I only need to take about 80 votes from her to turn this around. I've had some Muth supporters who've come to me since the election, and they said they wish they'd voted for me. A lot of people came to me and asked that I appeal the first court decision; I appealed it because I didn't want to let my supporters down." Did Moe have any answer to that? Not yet; he was still in the backcountry "and will get the news on a radio he has with him." Moe's is not a two-way set.

BUREAUCRACY MOVES SURPRISINGLY FAST when it can find a pocket of public apathy; with no opposition, it has a way of moving in quickly to gather whatever new powers it can. And so it may be in the "wilderness" issue which for awhile flared brightly in southern Inyo but which now, judging by public interest, may have burned to a mere ember. Fewer than 40 people "wandered in and out" as the Bureau of Land Management held another of its ritualized "public hearings" last week. Of the 40, at least a half-dozen were BLM people who clearly had a firm control on proceedings. They waited patiently for an enthusiastic public to fire questions at them, aware that in the southern parts of the county a growing public hostility has engendered petitions bearing nearly 2000 names, all in protest of the BLM wilderness "inventory" now underway. A few turned up, worried mostly about the fact that the federal rangers are now packing sidearms. To their questions came a less-than-satisfying answer: "The organic act section 303" brought into force the training of BLM rangers as law enforcement officers. But one voice at least may carry some weight with the

bureaucrats; that of a county supervisor, Richard McDonald who, in his district, has risen to a surprising popularity among his constituents. McDonald has said he thinks the bureau is not listening to the "input" that is brought before it in protest. McDonald presented the gathered federal cops with a resolution he easily gained from the board of supervisors who expressed a demand that the county government be made a part of BLM's decision-making processes in Inyo. The resolution also included a reminder that mining and recreation are two essential land uses in Inyo as established by a general plan. McDonald got virtually no response from the officials present, but was perfunctorily told that his resolution "would be forwarded to the area director." McDonald told newsmen that he has not yet given up and that he will continue to work with people in the area. One newsman present, the news service's Frank Burns, could find little to photograph at the ill-attended session. He settled on empty chairs as a subject; they, perhaps best of all, told the story of a galloping apathy.

CALTRANS IS NOT ABOUT TO GO IT ALONE in fencing some 300,000 feet (more than 50 miles) of Highway 395 between Lone Pine and the little community of Dunsmuir. But the board of supervisors has passed a resolution calling for fencing along that dangerous stretch ("most" dangerous in Inyo County) of highway that so far has claimed a number of victims and untold property damage thanks to roaming cattle. Supervisor McDonald says that someone besides the ranchers should fence the property due to obvious prohibitive costs. But Caltrans Director Bob Watkins says he thinks the cattlemen should pay. "If fencing were to go up, we would still need access control because livestock can wander out of a gate and be on the road. We haven't considered a fencing program, and I don't think we will consider it." Who then might underwrite a fence? The supervisors have their eye on the owner of most of the property: the Department of Water and Power which leases to the cattlemen.

ANIMAL TROUBLES OF ANOTHER KIND ABOUND (and also wander on roadways) in another part of Inyo. A National Park Service census reveals that Death Valley has 1543 wild burros virtually on a rampage through the delicate ecosystem of the valley area. They call it a "heavy impact," and can do little about it,

(NEWS BRIEFS continued, Page 13)



"We should form a citizens' grievance committee...We've all got problems..."

Along with the anguish and anger there arose also the occasional voice of reason and humor. Vital and eager to be heard was this young woman, Brenda Yother, whose animated outbursts drew smiles and good-natured applause. Her photogenic liveliness caught the eye of the photographer for this interesting sequence.



"...We're dealing with politicians, so BE politicians..."

Lively
'concerned
citizen'



"...but we've got to organize and put it together..."



"...or you won't get anything."

At Lone Pine a minor police incident turns into a full-blown community issue...

(Photos by
John Heston)

Word of the as-yet-unproven police "beating" at the Robert Mojarro home on Lone Pine Avenue spread across town like a dust storm off Owens Lake, increasing in fury and detail as it went. Within hours posters went up to advertise a "town meeting." The call for community action was timed to tempers, and scores of the angry and the curious turned up at the Lone Pine Town Hall on Friday night to air long-suppressed grievances.



Surprised at the turnout he got, "Chairman" Robert Frickle hesitantly calls for comments *"...to direct our energy into positive, constructive ideas to improve relations..."*



Robert Frickle
"chairman"

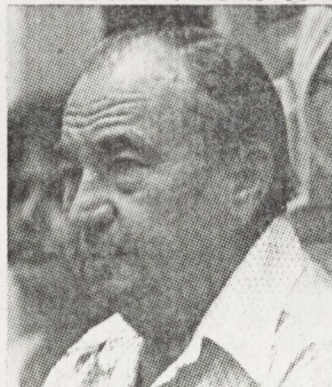
"EVERYBODY HAD BEEN TALKING-UP" THE POLICE INCIDENT OF A FEW DAYS BEFORE AND THE MOOD OF THE TOWN WAS PERFECT FOR A "TOWN MEETING" THAT WAS SPARKED BY THE TALK DOWN AT FRICKLE'S HEALTH FOOD STORE

IN A COMMUNITY OF CONTRASTING CULTURES, AND OF POLARIZED ATTITUDES where authority is both unctiously adored and chillingly reviled, it was bound to happen: a bitter clash between that authority and its unloving public. Following the "beating," "hand-cuffing" and "macing" of a group of partying teen-agers by two of Inyo's deputy sheriffs a few days before, it was practically no trouble at all for the owner of the local health food store to rouse interest - a great deal of it - in a "town

meeting." Shouting is not the style of Lone Pine's Robert Frickle, but his dulcet complaints about the police, uttered in an atmosphere of general hostility and incipient revolt, brought more than 200 people clamoring into the Lone Pine Town Hall where for well over two hours the Inyo County Sheriff's Department in general and two of its members in particular were roundly drubbed by a tediously ongoing chain of testimonial abuse.

Underlying it all was a lynch-mob urge that was barely concealed, but - to the credit of "self-appointed chairman" (his words) Frickle, it was kept under control. Off in the sidelines were at least three of Inyo's top elected officials, the district attorney and two supervisors who earlier in the day had quickly sensed there might be something afoot worth looking into. Through the meeting they all, D.A. "Buck" Gibbons and Supervisors Richard McDonald and Johnny Johnson, remained silent but watchful observers.

Conspicuously absent was any representative of the law enforcement agency in question: Sheriff Floyd Barton had patiently explained to the crowd's leadership that more than 24 hours' notice would have been required to enable him to cancel or forego a prior commitment at Mammoth Lakes. The officers in question, Tom Gonzales and Clyde George, were



D.A. Gibbons and Supervisor Johnson
"...silent but watchful observers"

forbidden attendance pending completion of an attorney general's investigation into the incident involving the teen-agers. They would have been received in any case with a great deal of hostility. If the testimonials against them were to be believed - and a lot of those present were eagerly wanting to believe them - Gonzales and George would have been humble lions thrown to roaring Christians.

In spite of the clamor of complaints, the meeting was not without its more introspective elements bringing forth a considerable amount of community self-examination. The issue of the town kids "having nothing to do" (besides, it is presumed, drink, smoke pot and raise hell at Diaz Lake) was brought up more than once. And there was a laudable absence of shout-downs when the occasional voice of reason broke through the sometimes overly-emotional parade of testimonies. If, as many believed, the meeting was a "good representation" of the town of Lone Pine, it was then a town deeply troubled and sincerely though sometimes awkwardly looking for some kind of resolution of the differences between itself and its law enforcement. Present, but unheard throughout the meeting, were some of the kids involved in the incident that sparked the meeting, and their families. But many others were less reticent: For some of their views on Lone Pine and its cops, turn the page.

...but the
sheriff and his
men are bound
to silence

Following the incident at Lone Pine in which two officers were accused of rough-handling several teen-agers, Sheriff Floyd Barton wanted an "outside" investigation. He quickly

called in an investigator from the California Department of Justice and then stepped back to "let the chips fall where they may." As expected, the attorney general's man rightly demanded - and got - a promise of absolute silence on the parts of all concerned. He also paid a visit to the NEWS-LETTER office, along with the district attorney, to secure a copy of last week's edition in which the alleged "beating" incident was reported.

But Floyd Barton, pressed for a defense of his officers, allowed at least a few words for publication. He said among other things that after their "regular days off" and since the release of one officer from the hospital, that the two men had temporarily been reassigned to duty at Independence, pending outcome of the investigation. As for Lone Pine's "town meet-

(See SHERIFF on next page)



Sheriff Barton, and Deputies George and Gonzales at work
"...then there will be the other side of the story."



Town meeting participant Eudora Bolling
"How many guns pulled on students?"

MORE THAN 200 LONE PINE RESIDENTS ATTENDED THE HASTILY CALLED TOWN MEETING; A REPORTER ASKED FOR A SHOW OF HANDS IN THE ISSUE

SAID ROBERT FRICKLE, the "self-appointed chairman of the meeting at Lone Pine, "I would like for us to direct our energy into positive, constructive ideas to improve relations with the sheriff's men and highway patrolmen." On the hand-lettered signs that had gone up on local bulletin boards in previous hours "highway traffic" and highway "danger" had been included, but the issues, if any, with the highway patrol were quickly lost in the outcry about the sheriff's office. At the outset Frickle also suggested that "incidents pending" (i.e., the alleged "beating" incident) would not be discussed, pending, it was presumed, the outcome of the official investigation. But "incidents pending" remained no less in the minds of all who were there.

Frickle asked for speakers, for "anyone with anything to say." There was a brief hesitancy, but finally one rose, then another. Reported here, in part, were the statements and feelings of many who stood up, sometimes reluctantly, sometimes angrily:

Terry Marshall: "The problem with the deputies in this area is that they lack respect as servants. Lack respect of privacies in the way they do their job. There should be," he said, "common sense in enforcing laws.

"Guns have been pulled on kids."

Frickle: "It's the sheriff's responsibility to see that these individuals, the deputies, are aware of the feelings of the people in the community.

"There is praise, too...but a man in uniform has no justification to approach another man and tell him to be quiet. It should

not end here. We need to find out where to take our complaints."

Elaine McRoberts: "The deputies don't have enough to do, so they harrass the young people...and the young people have nothing to do but drink."

Martha Mills: "They arrested my son. Didn't tell him why. They beat him up. It's not up to the deputies to mete out justice; isn't that up to the judge?"

Ms. Harold Carrasco: "My son was picked up at Diaz Lake, threatened by Gonzales on the way to jail. He was allowed no phone call. It was his first offense. They harrassed him, ransacked his car. I think it was illegal."

Elizabeth Carrasco: "I've been here 60 years...have great-grandchildren. Every time I've called the officers they've been right there. There's always two or three rotten apples in every barrel. We had better get rid of them."

Ladena Adkins: "The kids have no place to go...Give the kids some place to go and they won't have problems." Ms. Adkins also suggested a recall election against Barton, but to that there was no response.

Gladys Miller: "Where do you file complaints? They should be filed at the sub-station...It's the sheriff's business to ask. He should know about complaints..."

Eudora Bolling: "How many of you know about guns being pulled on students?" (Four in the audience raised their hands.) "My son was accused of robbing Diaz Lake. They wouldn't let us see him. A bond of \$2,000 on him. We don't have that kind of money. They hand-cuffed him to the patrol car, and did what they wanted. He was later released and told he was not guilty." Asked which deputies arrested her son, she replied "Gonzales and George."

George Sellberg: "Get someone here from the sheriff's office...I've been thrown down and abused. What we need to do is have a meeting with the sheriff's people. The trouble is, they're afraid to come and see us."

And on through the evening, so it went. A committee was formed; its members drafted the letter to the sheriff. With a tentative plan for another meeting, probably late this week, Friday night's session ended.

A reporter, seeking some clear view of the majority opinion, asked for a show of hands. How many people present felt that they had a legitimate complaint about Inyo County law enforcement? Fifty-eight hands went up. How many, on the other hand, believed that Inyo had generally good law enforcement? Only 18 hands were raised. As the new week opened, two new officers cruised Lone Pine; they may have harbored a few doubts.

SHERIFF, Continued

ing," he said, "I'll meet with the people anytime, but I'll need a reasonable amount of notice." (It was known that Barton had a previous engagement at Mammoth on the night of last week's meeting) As for the case itself, he said "I gave my word to the investigator that I would say nothing," and on the meeting he said, "I think the meeting was poorly timed in view of the investigation. I'm sure the problems with the people there can be resolved." Did he have any view, "any feeling," at all about the complaints against Gonzales and George? In answer Barton spoke with a calm assurance: "Everybody will have their day. When the investigation comes out, then there will be the other side of the story."

Meanwhile, Barton was visited at his office early this week by an appointed delegation from a committee formed at the meeting. He was handed a letter drafted by the committee. For the letter's content, see NEWS-LETTER's "FORUM" page.

FORUM

LETTERS AND COMMENT

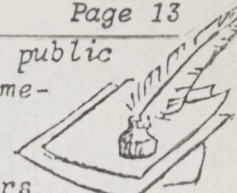
Sept. 11, 1978

INYO COUNTY NEWS-LETTER

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NEWS-LETTER welcomes letters and comment relevant to public issues. The editors will publish those considered timely and with viewpoints concisely stated. Most likely

to be published are those of 200 words or less. Letters or statements should be addressed to PO Box 531, Independence 93526. The editors remind their readers that publication of a letter does not in any way imply that the editors agree with its view.



WHO PAID LAUREN ELDER'S MEDICAL BILLS?

To the NEWS-LETTER:

As a follow-up to the Lauren Elder story I thought this might interest you. (An unsigned letter received by Author Elder after the filming of her story at Independence.)

- Bert Nodella
Producer,
GJL Productions
Hollywood

Lauren Elder:

The taxpayers hope you make enough from your movie to repay Medi-Cal for your medical care. Can you think of any good reason why we should pay your medical bills?

...and Elder's reply:

Dear Antagonist:

I'm sorry you feel so defensive about this project. Your anger is misplaced. I paid my local bill and several thousand dollars' worth of subsequent bills myself.

I hope you read my book. I believe you will find it quite impartial.

It is negative attitudes such as yours which created problems to begin with.

- Sincerely,
Lauren Elder

(Editors' note: The elder book, "And I Alone Survived," deals with her plane crash near Independence. It created a local controversy by its implication that the injured survivor had difficulty in getting medical help here. The author has had numerous other problems - and similar letters - since the controversy arose. According to the best sources available, Ms. Elder has personally paid all medical obligations arising out of the treatment for her injuries.)

THE LONE PINE CITIZENS' COMMITTEE LETTER TO FLOYD BARTON

Inyo County Sheriff and Inyo Board of Supervisors. (Copy to media)

Gentlemen:

This letter concerns the meeting held at the Lone Pine Town Hall last night, September 8, 1978, regarding "police action" and the public opinion of past and recent police action in our area.

During this meeting it was agreed upon by those present to organize a committee to consolidate and represent the opinions expressed by the public. Please consider this letter as a representation of those present and their concern over what we feel unacceptable police action.

The main topic of discussion among over 200 Lone Pine and Inyo County citizens revolved around two Inyo County deputies. These two were named as Deputy Clyde George and Deputy Tom Gonzales.

Public opinion at this meeting was solidly against the manner in which Deputies Clyde George and Tom Gonzales carry out their duties as our law enforcement agents. We therefore request that these two deputies, Clyde George and Tom Gonzales, be suspended from duty and or transferred as soon as feasible from our area.

If this cannot be done at this time, perhaps these two deputies could be placed on vacation until this matter is cleared up and or any pending legal action against Deputies Clyde George and Tom Gonzales are concluded.

We, the public, do not feel we need two such, in our opinion, strong-arm-tactic officers in our area. Please consider this request seriously as we are most concerned over this matter. We are sure that with proper consideration you will understand our views on this matter. And that we will be able to work together for a better community and better understanding between the public and our elected officials and their officers.

- Respectfully,

Terryl Marshall, Brenda Yother, Monie Brannigan, Robbye Carrasco, Harold E. Carrasco, Mary L. Oviatt, Patsy J. Bracken, Elaine McRoberts, Sherrill Hanson, Pat Roberts.

DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME - OR OURS

The NEWS-LETTER FORUM editors read the mail from bottom up. If there is no signature, the letter goes into the wastebasket unread. The FORUM page will publish letters with "name withheld on request," but these must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer. The editors feel that anything worth saying - or reading - is worth getting "up front" for, although in some cases anonymity may be necessary - and is assured - so long as we know the source.

NEWS BRIEFS, Continued

thanks mostly to public attitudes toward the burros. The Park Service set up an adopt-a-burro plan some months ago; it didn't work very well. Then there was a plan to simply shoot the burros before other wildlife and most plant life was done in. That met with a lot of public outrage. The burros and the park service are now at a Mexican stand-off so to speak. "People think they're cute, and, face it, they are," said one official.

- - - - -

A HELMET may have prevented the critical injuries to a Bishop motorcyclist who was rushed to Washoe Medical Center in critical condition. Earl Wilson, 25, went out of control (as evidenced by skid marks) on Big Pine's Canal Road. National statistics show that head injuries like his have increased in state's that have revoked - or, like California, never had - a "helmet law." Wilson underwent surgery wherein doctors hoped to save his life by relieving pressure on his brain.

Tennis: Inyo's latest health-fun fad

The fact that the "season" is over seems to bother no one; tennis is the "in" thing, its growing popularity increased by books, movies, health faddists - and a number of popular tennis heroes on the pro circuits.

No longer a "rich man's game," it has become, like skiing, a pastime of all. Blue collars change at every opportunity into their "tennis whites" and head for the nearest court. And of those, Inyo has many, several of them recently resurfaced and now ready for good play. One dealer in equipment, Bishop's Chuck Gillem, says his sales are up 25% in only two months. Racquets range in price from a modest \$7.44 to a pro's figure of \$120.

Says Sue Conn, organizer of Bishop's eighth annual tournament: "Once the fever bites you, you can't quit." The tournament gets underway this weekend with well over a hundred entries from many miles away.

Why all the sudden interest in a sport that's been around for years? Says Gillem: "They're tired of the world and turning to themselves to improve and control their own lives."

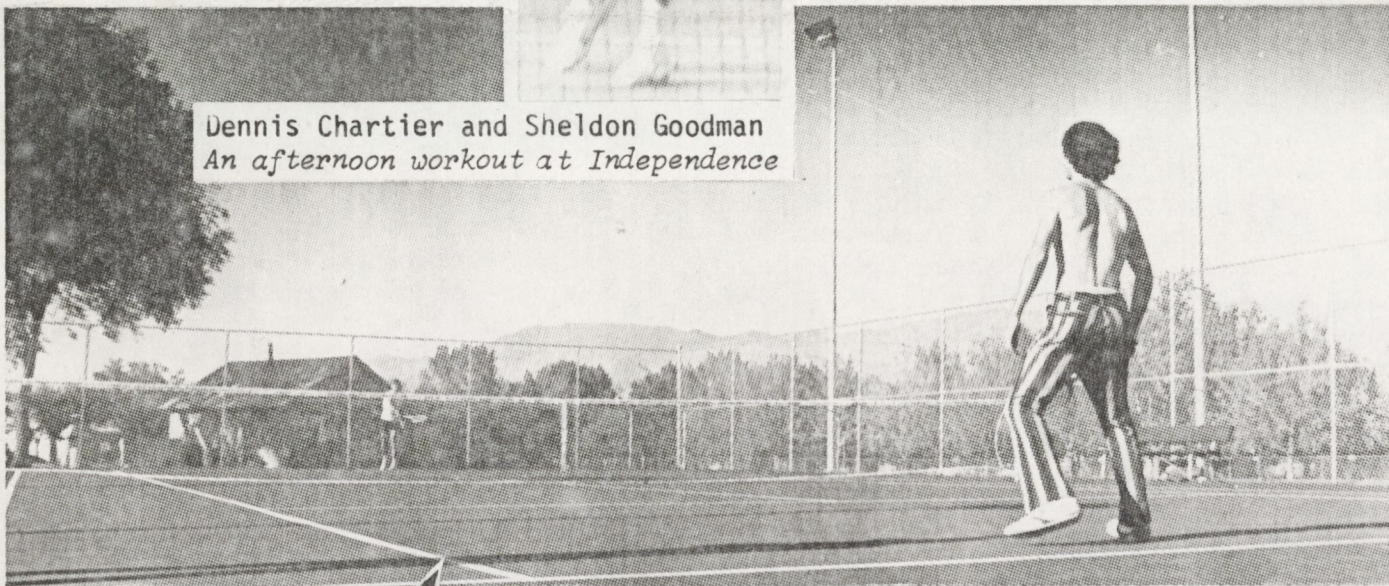
And what happened to jogging? It's still there, too.



Chuck Gillem has a good racquet going...

Tennis purists shun pre-strung racquets. Only two valley shops offer the exacting service: The Bike and Sport Shoppe and the Outdoorsman.

Dennis Chartier and Sheldon Goodman
An afternoon workout at Independence



eastern sierra news service

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"May the news in your day be good news every day"

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